

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



**FISCAL NOTE**

**HB 684 - SB 606**

March 3, 2009

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Requires the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services to provide interpreter services for all hearing impaired students at all public institutions of higher education at no cost to the student.

**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Increase State Expenditures - \$91,400**

**Other Fiscal Impact – There will be a shift in expenditures estimated to exceed \$5,000,000 to the Department of Human Services from higher education to fund interpreter services for hearing impaired students.**

**The Department of Human Services could be in jeopardy of losing federal funds in the amount of \$66,646,500 if the provisions of the bill result in non-compliance with the federal Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.**

Assumptions:

- The Department of Human Services (DHS) currently has agreements with the Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee to provide interpreter services that are related to the education of the client/student as required by federal law, 34 CFR 361.53(e). Through these agreements, the institutions are required to provide assistive services for vocational rehabilitation clients of the Department.
- The Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee will no longer be responsible for providing interpreter services to hearing impaired students. According to DHS, the institutions use the same interpreter service provider that the Department uses. Any cost currently incurred by the institutions will shift to DHS.
- DHS estimates 300 students will require interpreting services 12 hours per week at a rate of \$47 per hour while taking classes for 30 weeks per

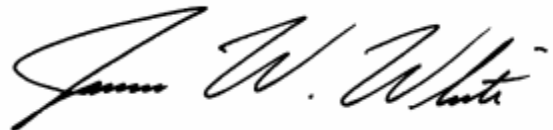
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year. The state expenditures is estimated to be at least \$5,076,000 (\$300 x \$47 x 12 x 30).

- DHS will hire two administrative positions to schedule, pay oversee, and coordinate all aspects of the interpreter services at the public institutions. These two positions will result in an increase in recurring expenditures of \$91,444 which includes salaries (\$66,600), benefits (\$22,644), office supplies (\$500), and communications and networking (\$1,700).
- DHS will be in jeopardy of losing \$66,646,500 in federal funds for the Vocational Rehabilitation program if the provisions of the bill lead to non-compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If the federal funds are lost, the Department would need an appropriation to keep services in the Vocational Rehabilitation program at current levels.

### **CERTIFICATION:**

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "White" clearly legible.

James W. White, Executive Director

/kml